The collection of water cess, from industries and local authorities, during the financial year 2003-04 was Rs.88.50 crores.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. The water cess is a small charge that the industries using water including sea water have to bear for the protection of the environment and conservation of natural resources.

प्रो॰ अलका क्षत्रिय: सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से कहना चाहती हूं कि समुद्र तट की जमीन पर जब प्रोन कल्चर और फिश कल्चर के लिए जो सी वॉटर यूज़ होता है, उससे पर्यावरण को बहुत बड़ा खतरा होता है। क्या मंत्री जी यह बात जानते हैं? जो सी वॉटर प्रोन कल्चर और फिश कल्चर के लिए यूज़ होता है, उसके ऊपर कोई कर लिया जाता है या नहीं? इसके बारे में मंत्री जी के क्या विचार हैं?

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, there is no survey exclusively for sea water. But, there is the Water Cess Act, which is a Central Act, in which, notwithstanding sea water, whatever be the source of water used by industry and other local authorities, Cess is levied by the State Government concerned. Out of the cess so collected, 80 per cent will be given to the State Government and the remaining 20 per cent goes to the Central Government. And, as such, there is no demarcation between sea water and other water.

प्रो॰ अलका क्षत्रिय: सर, गुजरात में बड़ा समुद्र तट है और समुद्र तट की जमीन में salinity बढ़ती है जिससे जमीन की फर्टेलिटी खत्म हो जाती है। इसके बारे में सरकार ने क्या कदम उठाए हैं और वित्तीय वर्ष 2003-2004 के दौरान उद्योग एवं स्थानीय इकाई से जो कर इकट्ठा किया गया, उसमें से गुजरात का हिस्सा कितना है और गुजरात के ऊपर इसमें से कितना खर्च किया जा रहा है?

SHRI A. RAJA: The State Government, local bodies and private industries are free to use sea water or any other water. The cess would be levied as per the rules.

*51. [*The questioners* (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI AND DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) *were absent. For answer vide page* 34].

Stampede at New Delhi Railway Station

*52. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prime cause of stampede and resultant deaths at

New Delhi Railway Station recently was due to issuing of unreserved tickets to destinations in Bihar much beyond the capacity;

(b) whether to derive more revenue Railways permit unreserved passengers to travel in reserved sleeper coaches much beyond capacity causing inconvenience and harassment to reserved passengers; and

(c) what steps are being proposed to lessen the crowd on platforms including curtailment of persons accompanying travellers within station premises?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) No, Sir. The incident could only be taken as an unfortunate isolated incident and there was no lapse on anybody's part which would have caused the lady passenger to fall. The enquiry committee after examining eye witnesses held no one responsible for the incident.

On 13.11.2004 Train No.2388 Down Jan Sadharan Express scheduled to start at 1510 hrs. was placed at Platform No.3 at 1100 hrs., and the doors were opened at 1210 hrs. There was heavy rush at New Delhi Railway Station due to Chhat Festival and Id towards Bihar. While crowd was descending to Platform No. 3 to board Jan Sadharan Express, suddenly an elderly woman, due to pressure of rush, slipped down on the landing of Foot Over Bridge of Platform No. 2/3. Consequently, some more passengers panicked and a stampede started which resulted in stumbling of some more passengers.

5 ladies, including one 14 years old girl, unfortunately, succumbed to their injuries. Of the remaining 10 injured, 2 who were having convulsions were shifted to Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital. All the others were provided proper treatment at Northern Railway Central Hospital. One doctor was specially deputed at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital to look after the injured and all the medicines were made available for the injured admitted in Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital.

Unreserved tickets are not issued for any specific train. The unreserved tickets are issued only for a particular destination in the second

class and are valid for originating journeys on the date mentioned on the ticket. The issue of unreserved tickets cannot be linked to carrying capacity of a specific train.

(b) Railways, as a policy, do not permit unreserved passengers to travel in reserved sleeper class coaches, as the unreserved tickets are not valid for travel in reserved coaches.

(c) It is proposed to review the platform ticket policy. Public will also be educated to avoid congestion at Railway Stations. Accordingly, in order to prevent future recurrence of such incidents of overcrowding, it is proposed to install Closed Circuit Television System (CCTV); speeding of the construction of sanctioned buildings and terminals besides Foot Over Bridges.

SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Sir, it was a very serious incident wherein five people died at the New Delhi Railway Station during Diwali and Chhat Puja festivities. Sir, the Inquiry Commission which was constituted by the Railway Ministry has held nobody responsible for the death of those five people. Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister that knowing well that during the festival season there will be a huge rush at the railway station, why the Railways did not take any precautionary measures to operate a special train from the other station, apart from the New Delhi Railway Station, because it does not have so much of capacity to handle the huge rush for the special trains.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member that on that fateful day, that is, on 13th, we operated five trains before the Jan Sadharan was to leave. During that period of time, particularly, this year, Diwali, Chhat Puja and Id came one after the other. On that day, about 1,13,000 tickets were issued. As regards the hon. Member's suggestion to use other stations for this purpose, we have a proposal to decongest...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: When it did not have the capacity, why you issued 1,13,000 tickets.

SHRI R. VELU: I can answer this question. There is no system under which you can say 'no' or deny to a second class or unreserved traveller. You have to issue ticket to him. When more tickets are issued, we always make arrangements to run special trains; that is why I said five special

trains were operated on that day towards Eastern side to carry people towards Bihar and Eastern U.P.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Female foeticide and sex selective abortions in Himachal Pradesh

*43. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that female foeticide and sex selective abortions are common in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) whether the National Commission for Women has called for a thorough check on the use of ultrasound techniques in the State; and

(c) what is the response of the State Government to the problem?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) There has been a decline in the child sex ratio in Himachal Pradesh from 951 to 897 between 1991 and 2001. One of the reasons for this decline could be female foeticide and sex selective abortions.

(b) National Commission for Women visited Himachal Pradesh from 15-16 July, 2004, to evaluate the progress of the development of women so as to safeguard the dignity and protect the rights of the women in the country. The issue relating to female foeticide and sex selective abortions, being common in Himachal Pradesh, was raised in the proactive consultation meeting with NGO/social activist etc. The concern expressed by them is put up before the heads of the State Government's Departments for their reaction and plan of action for the resolution in a meeting co-chaired by Chief Secretary of the State Government and the Chairperson of the National Commission for Women.

(c) The State Government has taken the following action:—

- The State has notified State Appropriate Authority and District Appropriate Authorities in the State to strictly implement the PNDT Act.